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Thailand, the only country in mainland Southeast Asia which is associated with SEATO, remains a surprisingly stable enclave--at least on the surface--in a region marked by change and unrest.

A This stability rests squarely upon continuing amity among the various members of the ruling oligarchy (which has dominated Thailand since 1947).

1. At present there are no indications of serious friction among these Thai leaders.

Thailand has been swayed to some extent by the Communists' "peace co-existence" campaign.

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A. Bangkok has lifted its embargo against the shipment of non-strategic goods to Communist China.

1. In fact, there is some indication that top Thai leaders have a financial interest in developing such trade.

III. Despite such signs of self-interested "wavering", we do not believe that Thailand will abandon its pro-Western orientation in the foreseeable future.

A. Phibun and other officials have emphatically denied all suggestion that a serious change in policy is even being contemplated.

B. Thailand's Foreign Minister, Prince Wan, has reiterated Thai opposition to Peiping's entry into the UN or any of its

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Privately Phibun has expressed concern over Laos, and said he would do his best to counter the Laotian drift toward neutralism.

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